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Finalists Announced for the 2011 National Gold Medal Awards

AAPRA and NRPA select agencies to compete for prestigious honor in the park and recreation industry

ASHBURN, Va., May 5, 2011 – The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2011 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. This year's proud sponsor of the Gold Medal Awards program is Musco Lighting LLC.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the U.S. that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition. Applications are separated into five classes based on population with a state park system class every other year, and agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials. Four finalists in each class are chosen to compete for grand honors each year.

The 2011 Gold Medal finalists are:

Class I (population 250,000 and over)

- Kansas City Parks and Recreation, Mo.
- Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department, N.C.
- Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department, Fla.
- Portland Parks and Recreation, Ore.

Class II (population 100,001 – 250,000)

- Boise Parks and Recreation Department, Idaho
- City of Lakewood Department of Community Resources, Colo.
- Rockford Park District, Ill.
- Roswell Recreation, Parks, Historic and Cultural Affairs Department, Ga.

Class III (population 50,001 – 100,000)

- City of Kettering Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts, Ohio
- Plymouth Parks and Recreation Department, Minn.
- Waukesha Parks, Recreation and Forestry, Wis.
- Wheaton Park District, Ill.

Class IV (population 25,001 – 50,000)

- Elmhurst Park District, Ill.
- Town of Parker Parks and Recreation, Colo.

- Salisbury Parks and Recreation, N.C.
- West Bend Parks, Recreation and Forestry, Wis.

Class V (population less than 25,000)

- City of Cullman Park and Recreation Department, Ala.
- City of Fairfax Parks and Recreation Department, Va.
- City of Green River Parks and Recreation Department, Wyo.
- City of Lafayette, Colo.

State Awards (for state agencies, given every other year)

- Florida Park Service, Division of Recreation and Parks, Florida DEP
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Division of State Parks
- North Carolina State Parks and Recreation

A panel of five park and recreation professionals reviews and judges all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation on both the local and national levels.

This year's finalists will compete for Grand Plaque Award honors this summer, and the six Grand Plaque recipients will be announced live during NRPA's Annual Congress & Exposition in Atlanta, Ga., Nov. 1-3, 2011.

For more information on the Gold Medal Awards, go to www.nrpa.org/awards or www.aapra.org.

The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is a non-profit organization founded to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. For more information, visit www.aapra.org.

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 20,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives, and conservation of natural and cultural resources. For more information, visit www.NRPA.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrec-magazine.org.

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